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AND

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MUSIC CONTAINED IN THE PREVIOUS NUMBERS OF THE "MUSICAL TIMES."

No. 1—In these delightful pleasant groves	-	-	-	Purcell
2—Hear my prayer, O Lord	-	-	-	Winter
3—Soon as I careless stray'd	-	-	-	Festa
Hail! all hail! thou merry month of May	-	-	-	Weber
4—Thou art gone to the grave	-	-	-	Beethoven
Hear what God the Lord	-	-	-	V. Novello
5—Hail! smiling morn	-	-	-	Spoofforth
6—Let all men praise the Lord	-	-	-	Mendelssohn
Forgive, blest shade	-	-	-	Dr. Calcott
7—Four rounds, for three voices				
8—Call to remembrance	-	-	-	Farrant
9—Pleasures of Innocence	-	-	-	From the German
Amidst the myrtles	-	-	-	Battishill
10—Teach me, O Lord	-	-	-	Rogers
11—Here in cool grot	-	-	-	Lord Mornington
12—My God, look upon me	-	-	-	John Reynolds
13—Oh, Nanny, wilt thou gang with me?				Carter & Harrison
14 } When winds breathe soft	-	-	-	Webbe
15 }				
16—Soldiers, brave and gallant be	-	-	-	Gastoldi
17—All people that on earth	-	-	-	Tallis
18—Sweet honey-sucking bees (1st Part)	-	-	-	Wilbye
19—Vital Spark	-	-	-	Novello
20 } Sweet honey-sucking bees (2nd part)	-	-	-	Wilbye
21 } Now pray we for our Country	-	-	-	Eliza Flower
22—Now the bright morning star	-	-	-	Greville
23—Thine, O Lord, is the greatness	-	-	-	Kent
24—Just like Love	-	-	-	Davy & Novello
25—In Judah God is known	-	-	-	Mendelssohn
26—Maidens fair of Padua's City	-	-	-	Gastoldi
27—And he shall purify	-	-	-	Handel

All communications of the progress of Singing Class Teaching, addressed to the Editor of the Musical Times, 69, Dean Street, Soho, or 24, Poultry, will be interesting.

HANDEL'S ORATORIO "THE MESSIAH."

THIS noble Musical Work has been known to the public for more than one hundred years, and has not only maintained its universal favor

during that long period, but, at the end of it, it is more generally appreciated, because more generally known. Fine as is the music of the individual pieces, yet must its merits be judged by a much higher standard, and the secret of its lasting popularity will be discovered. We find by a memorandum in the original score, which is preserved in the Royal Library at Buckingham Palace, that the Oratorio was written down by Handel in the short space of 21 days. It appears to have been commenced on Saturday, the 22nd of August, 1741; the first part to have been finished on Friday, the 28th August; the second part to have been finished on Sunday, the 6th September; and the Oratorio to have been finished on Saturday, the 12th September; and, according to that memorandum, he completed the filling up (ausgefüllt) on the 14th September. These memoranda, which are in Handel's own hand-writing, are extremely interesting, as showing that he must have had the whole of this great work in his head in a complete form before he committed any part of it to paper. Handel's genius appears to have had precisely the right amount of development at the time he undertook the composition of what he called his *Sacred Oratorio*. He had already produced the Oratorios of *Esther*, *Deborah*, *Athalia*, *Israel in Egypt*, and *Saul*; and, after a long career of writing for the Orchestra of the Italian Opera, he had resolved to abandon his connection with the Stage, by which he added largely to the time at his command, and with this amount of experience, he brought, also, an ardent religious feeling to his task. He was, also, most fortunate in meeting so able a coadjutor in the gentleman who assisted him to select the words, Charles Jennens, Esq., of Gopsall Hall, Leicestershire, an accomplished amateur of music, and an inti-

mate friend of Handel's, with whom he spent much time. It was at Gopsall Hall that most of the music of the *Messiah* was said to have been composed; and many must have been the delightful arguments and discussions between these two friends before an ultimate decision should have produced the harmonious combination of words and music which makes up the wondrous whole of the Sacred Oratorio. The *Messiah* so completely satisfies the requirements of a perfect Oratorio, that it is worthy of minute examination, in order that future composers' works may be submitted to a similar test. The subject is one most interesting to all christian men; and the treatment of it, so far as the words are concerned, has been most judicious. The three parts may be analyzed nearly as follow:—

The FIRST PART contains the prophetic promises of the coming of the Messiah—his advent—and the glorious and happy consequences to the world are described.

The SECOND PART is occupied with the Messiah's passion, death, resurrection, and ascension—his taking possession of his kingdom—the spread of his holy gospel—the confusion of his adversaries—and his final triumph and universal reign.

The THIRD PART relates the prophecies of his second advent—the resurrection of the dead, and the final deliverance of mankind from sin, sorrow, and death everlasting—and the Oratorio concludes with the triumphant song of the redeemed.

How admirably Handel has translated all these varying sentiments into his divine musical language, the admiring listeners of the last hundred years have all borne high testimony; and we may safely predict that for years to come the hearers of this heavenly concert of sound and sense will, as Handel desired, "not only be entertained, but be made better men."

There is some difference of opinion amongst the Historians as to the first public production of the Oratorio of the *Messiah*; but most of them appear to decide that it was first produced at Dublin, in April, 1742, and at London, during the Spring of 1743, when it was repeated several times with great success. In the promotion of the cause of charity, the *Messiah* has been more often used than any other musical composition

Its very first performance was given by Handel for the benefit of the Poor Prisoners in the City of Dublin; and from the year 1749 to 1777, the Oratorio was performed annually at the Foundling Hospital in London by Handel and his successors, Mr. J. C. Smith and Mr. J. Stanley; from which performances the institution derived a profit of £10,293. His Majesty George III, and the Directors of the Ancient Concerts, ordered the *Messiah* to be annually performed for the benefit of the Royal Society of Musicians, which performance is continued to the present day; and many other Charitable Institutions, both in London and in the Provinces, have derived substantial advantages from their performances of this noble and popular work.

There are copies extant of the score of the *Messiah* which was published by Walsh during Handel's life-time, the plates of which were said to have been corrected by Handel himself; and several editions have been printed since with the Orchestral Parts reduced to two lines for the use of those who would accompany the Vocal Parts with the Pianoforte only. We have been permitted the use of the stereotype plates of the chorus "And he shall purify," from the new and cheap edition of this Work, which is being issued by Mr. Novello: to recommend the Work is unnecessary, as who would not possess Handel's Work if they could; and here is an edition, which, from its beauty and price, places it within the reach of every one's means. The student may now possess himself with a copy of the entire Oratorio for little more than the cost of two fashionable songs; and the amateur may here possess a portable and legible copy, in which he may follow the performance with his eyes as well as his ears. We most heartily wish success to the publisher in his bold but beneficent undertaking.

BEETHOVEN'S MASS IN D.—This stupendous work will be performed at the Birmingham Festival on Friday, the 28th August. At the Bonn Festival, when this, the greatest Sacred Composition by Beethoven, was undertaken, the vocal department of the band was subjected to fourteen or fifteen careful rehearsals; and, indeed, the well-practised chorus engaged by the Philharmonic Society underwent eight rehearsals. The sensation produced upon the musical public by the performance upon this occasion, completely justifies the Birmingham Committee in their choice of it. The Mass in D—the new Oratorio of "Elijah," by Mendelssohn—and the fine Cantata of "God thou art great," by Spohr, will form the novelties of the Festival.